



Dear Confreres and members of the Salesian Family!

I am extremely pleased to greet you with brotherly affection as the Provincial of St. John Paul II, Shillong through my first circular today. First and foremost, I would like to thank the Lord for all his blessings, especially for his call to lead this fastest growing Salesian Province in South Asia region. It is both a privilege and a humbling responsibility to serve our Congregation and the Church in this capacity, and I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude to God and excitement as I embark on this journey alongside each and every one of you.

I accepted this challenging responsibility by trusting in God that he will continue to guide me and show me the way. I sincerely thank you too for placing your complete trust in me and for accepting me as your Provincial. My sincere thanks to you for all your good wishes and assurance of prayers and support as I take up this new leadership role. We will make this journey together as family to be authentic “signs and bearers of God’s love for the young people” and for the greater glory of God.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our Rector Major, Cardinal Archbishop Angel Fernandez Arttime and his Council for their trust in me to guide the Province according to the spirit of Don Bosco and their assurance of support and prayers as I begin this new journey of my life. Secondly, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to His grace Most Rev. Victor Lyngdoh, Archbishop of Shillong for presiding over the Holy Eucharist on the installation day, and for his beautiful homily, his blessings and prayers. I thank him for his availability and his closeness to us. I also thank Fr. Biju Michael, the Regional Councillor for South Asia for coming to Shillong in the name of our Rector Major to install me as the 03<sup>rd</sup> Provincial of St. John Paul II, Shillong. He is always available to accompany us and help us with his friendly advice and wise decisions.

I express my deepest thanks to my predecessor, Fr. Paul Olphindro Lyngkot, the 02<sup>nd</sup> Provincial of INS. On behalf of all the confreres, I extend my deepest gratitude to him for guiding us for the last six years with tireless efforts, total dedication and great commitment. He spared no effort, time and energy to nurturing and developing our Salesian missions in this region. As Provincial, he was a father as well as a friend to each one of us. He knew every detail of the province and would see to everything with great care and love. Our Province has grown stronger in terms of personnel, religious discipline, accompaniment of young confreres and young people, financial management and stability and other developmental works. He was very patient, kind and understanding and was able to build up good relationship with all of us. We sincerely thank him for his valuable contribution for the growth of our province, and more especially for his brotherly affection, care and concern for each one of us. He and his team laid a solid foundation upon which we will continue to build and grow as Salesians guided by the spirit of Don Bosco in these coming years.

I thank all my brother Provincials especially Fr. Januarius Sangma (ING Provincial), Fr. Jose Kuruvachira (IND Provincial), Fr. Santiago Thomas (INH Provincial), Fr. Sebastian Kuricheal (ING Provincial designate), Fr. Banzelao Teixeira (INP Vice Provincial), former Provincials of ING and INS, confreres from different provinces of India who came for my installation and for praying for me. My sincere thanks to all the members of the Salesian family, especially Sr. Mabel Dhar (Mother General of VSDB), Sr. Elizabeth George (FMA Provincial of Shillong), Sr. Maria Goretti Sangma (MSMHC Provincial of Shillong), Salesian Cooperators and Past pupils, our close collaborators and civil authorities, family members, friends and well-wishers for their encouraging presence and prayers on the installation day. May God bless them all with his abundant graces.

I am also grateful to all the Provincial Council members for their constant support. Lastly, my sincere thanks to the community of Sacred Heart Theological College, together with Fr. James Thyrniang, the Economer and Fr. Daniel Dabitlang M Cajee, the Province Secretary who meticulously planned and arranged every detail of the installation programme. May God bless them all for their hard work and generosity for the success of the programme.

According to our Constitutions, the primary task of the Provincial is to *“carry out his service of building up a fraternal provincial community in union with the Rector Major”* (C 161). I invite each one of you to join with me to continue to strengthen our fraternity and to deepen our bond of union within the provincial community. In the spirit of Don Bosco, let us keep on cultivating an atmosphere of family and sense of belonging, where each individual feels valued, supported, appreciated and empowered to realize his potential and dreams, and also to find joy and fulfillment in serving the Lord as Salesians. I feel that we need to foster, more emphatically, a culture of collaboration, solidarity, dialogue and mutual respect, recognizing the unique gifts and talents that each person brings to enrich our Salesian mission and family.

As we look ahead, I invite you to recommit ourselves to the ideals and principles that define our Salesian charismatic identity. In the last 45 years of our Congregation, our Rector Majors have consistently referred to *“our charismatic identity as Salesians, as consecrated persons, emphasizing how this is the most important and essential element from which to care for, cultivate and build our spirit and our action as Salesians of Don Bosco”* (cf. AGC 440, p.19). We should always cherish our charismatic identity as Salesian consecrated persons and deepen it through our daily fidelity to the moments of prayer, reading, reflection and other spiritual exercises.

GC 28 has also strongly emphasized the primacy of God in our lives and the necessity to keep our priority clear as Salesians. As consecrated persons, the first and foremost essential thing is to be in union with Christ and be rooted in Him. In the Gospel of John, Jesus himself invites us to abide in him if we want to bear abundant fruit, and this fruitfulness of our life comes from Jesus alone, because apart from him we can do nothing (cf. Jn 15:4-5). For this reason, the theme of GC 29 is appropriately chosen, **“Passionate about Jesus Christ, dedicated to young people”**. So, if we want to keep alive our charismatic identity, we have to be passionate about Jesus Christ and be fascinated by his life and teachings. The forthcoming Provincial Chapter and GC 29 will certainly deepen and strengthen this fundamental aspect of our life as Salesians.

My dear confreres, I invite you too to embrace our mission with renewed enthusiasm and dedication, always keeping in mind the well-being of the young people entrusted to our care, especially the poor, downtrodden, neglected and marginalized. We should never forget and leave behind the poor and the abandoned in our apostolic activities. Let us remember that it is for them that we are consecrated, it is for them that we dedicated our whole lives and made our promises to the Lord. Let us reaffirm our preference for the young people who are poor and abandoned. As we gaze at the new challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, let us remain steadfast in our faith and united in our commitment to serving God and others – especially the young. Let us strive to be beacons of hope, compassion, and joy to the young people, reaching out to those most in need with open hearts and open minds.

## NEWS AND INFORMATION

### ADIEU FR. MATHACHAN (RIP)

We were all shocked and saddened at the demise of Fr. Matthew Payappilly who is dearly known as Fr. Mathachan on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Nazareth Hospital after suffering liver and pancreatic cancer only for a short period of time. The funeral held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Don Bosco Technical School, Shillong was attended by a large number of religious and the faithful from Sohra and around Shillong. His grace Archbishop Victor Lyngdoh presided over the Holy Eucharist and concelebrated by over one hundred priests. In Fr. Mathachan we lost a gentle soul, dynamic and gifted Salesian, a faithful son of Don Bosco and spiritual father who accompanied so many young confreres in their vocational journey. We thank the Lord for the gift of a beautiful person like Fr. Mathachan to our Province, and thank him for his generous service and immense contribution for the mission of the Church in northeast India. As we mourn the passing of our cherished confrere, let us also celebrate the legacy he leaves behind. His gentle voice and wise counsel touched the hearts of many. He spoke not only with words but with the silent language of kindness, humility, and understanding. Though he may no longer walk among us, his spirit will forever dwell in the cherished memories we hold dear. May his soul find eternal peace in the loving embrace of God, and may we also find solace in knowing that his legacy will live on in the hearts of many. Adieu dear Fr. Mathachan, may you rest in peace.

Once again, we offer our heartfelt condolences to the family of Fr. Mathachan and assure them of our prayers. I thank Fr. Saji Stephen, Rector and the community of Don Bosco Technical School for all the arrangements of the funeral service. I also thank Bro. Pyndappura Nongdhar for assisting Fr. Mathachan in his last days of sickness and suffering. I would like to remind you that *“On the death of a confrere or novice the community to which he belonged will have thirty Masses said, and one Mass will be said in every house of the province”* (R 76.1). I request all the rectors and leaders of the communities to remember our obligation to offer Masses for our deceased confrere.

## 05<sup>TH</sup> PROVINCIAL CHAPTER

The 05<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter of INS will be held from **07<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024** in Pastoral Centre, Shillong. There will be 64 Chapter members from different communities and the province delegates with two observers. Fr. Denis Lalfela, the Moderator and the Preparatory Commission have been working very hard to set everything ready on time for the Chapter. He had also visited all the regions of our Province to animate the confreres on the theme and other important information about the Chapter. I thank Fr. Denis and his team for all the preparations. The Chapter will conclude on 10<sup>th</sup> May with supper. I invite all of you to continue to pray for the success of the 05<sup>th</sup> Provincial Chapter.

I will also announce the new Provincial Council members and the new Rectors on the last day of the Chapter. There will be a short felicitation to the new Council Members before supper. On 11<sup>th</sup> May there will be a joint Provincial Council Meeting comprising of the old and new Council members in Pastoral Centre.

## YAR ORIENTATION MEETING

Our Province is glad to welcome Fr. Joseph Prabu, Secretary, Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (YaR) and Fr. Bosco Francis, In-charge of Migrant Ministry, South Asia Region on 06<sup>th</sup> May 2024. I would like to remind you that they will animate our Province on the theme of **“Empowering Families & Communities for Caring of the Young people at Risk”** and **“Migrant Ministry”** on 06<sup>th</sup> May 2024 from 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm in Pastoral Centre. It is meant not only for YaR ministry but also for parish ministry and family apostolate. I request all the delegates of 05<sup>th</sup> PC to attend this orientation programme especially those who work in the parishes and other YaR or Migrant related ministry.

## VOCATION CAMP FOR POST-MATRIC STUDENTS

Vocation camp for post-matric students was held from 20<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Pastoral Centre. Altogether there were 42 participants from the three dioceses of Shillong, Jowai and Nongstoin, and two from Diphu diocese. Out of this, 37 boys will join the Preparatory Course in Pastoral Centre and Don Bosco Aspirantate Nonglakhiat after the declaration of their results. I thank and congratulate Fr. Primus Syiem, INS Vocation Promoter and the brothers namely, Cl. Mark Shanbor Thyrianiang, Cl. Albert Swer, Br. Joveen Orion Nongrum, Br. Simon Sohtun and the community of Pastoral Centre for the successful completion of the Vocation Camp.

## PRENOVITIATE ORIENTATION COURSE 2024

The Prenovitiate Orientation Course has begun on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024 in RRTC, Umran under the leadership of Fr. Daniel Dabitlang M Cajee and two brothers – Cl. Lamkumar Nonglang and Cl. Leo Myrchiang. The inauguration ceremony was held on 20<sup>th</sup> April evening. There are 35 participants in the course. They will have a month-long course on English, Communication Skill, Inter-personal relationship etc. The course will conclude on 01<sup>st</sup> June 2024 and then proceed to Bosco Home, Herma in the evening. We thank Fr. Kenny Pakma, Rector and the community of RRTC for accommodating our Prenovices for a month and also the matric students from Savio Juniorate for 3 weeks before they joined Don Bosco Aspirantate Nonglakhiat.

## VESTITION OF NOVICES AND FIRST PROFESSION

Our 30 novices will be vested with their religious habits on **05<sup>th</sup> May 2024** at St. John Bosco Shrine, Sohra, and they will make their first profession on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at Don Bosco Sunnyside at 07.00 am. Out of 30, five of them belong to Guwahati Province and the rest are of our Province. We thank the Lord for the gift of 25 new confreres to our province and let us accompany them with our prayers so that they may persevere and grow stronger day by day in their Salesian vocation. I sincerely thank Fr. Jose Vettath, the Novice Master for the last 6 years, who accompanied our novices in their spiritual journey with so much love and dedication. During his tenure as the Novice Master, about 96 novices made their first profession, and it is a great blessing and a sign of hope for the young province like ours.

## FINAL PROFESSION AND RENEWAL

This year we have 8 confreres who will make their final commitment to the Lord. They are: Cl. Firstbornson Jyrwa, Cl. Celestine Narlong, Cl. Gilbert Sangriang, Cl. Lambert Thongnirit, Cl. Khrawburom Wanniang, Cl. Johny Lamare, Cl. Reniel B. Synrem and Br. Hadrian Rymbai. We thank all the formators and spiritual guides who accompanied them during the period of initial formation and discernment process. The Final Profession will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 2.00 pm in Mawlai Parish Church. We congratulate them for their generosity and courage to commit themselves totally to the Lord and accompany them with our prayerful support.

There will also be 30 brothers who are getting ready to renew their religious vows. They will have a spiritual preparation in Pastoral Centre from 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 and make their renewal of profession on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 6.30 am.

## NEW NOVICES AND PRENOVICES

We will have 28 new Novices and 35 new Prenovices this year. The new novices will reach Sunnyside on 28<sup>th</sup> May and begin their Novitiate on 29<sup>th</sup> May with the initiation ceremony. The prenovices will join Bosco Home Herma on 02<sup>nd</sup> June to begin their Prenovitiate course. Let us keep them all in our prayers.

## CL. WANTEILANG KHYLLAIT - MISSIONARY TO BRAZIL

We wish all the best and God's blessings upon Cl. Wanteilang Khyllait as he leaves for Brazil as missionary on 05<sup>th</sup> May 2024. He will continue his Practical Training there and we assure him of our prayerful remembrance that he may have a beautiful missionary experience.

## HEALTH UPDATES

**Fr. Patrick Nongrang:** I am happy to share the positive news of Fr. Patrick's health. Following a period of illness, he has made significant progress and is well on his way to a full recovery. We are all immensely grateful for the outpouring of prayers and support during this time. Let us continue to prayer for a smooth and complete recovery.

**Fr. Mani Kochupura** of St. Anthony's College is not keeping so well these days. He will be undergoing the operation to remove stones in the gallbladder on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 in Nazareth Hospital. Let us pray for the success of the operation and his full recovery.

## CONDOLENCES

I would like to offer my heartfelt condolences to Rev. Fr. Raphael Tham at the demise of his elder brother Mr. Libertus Tham on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024. May God grant him eternal repose in his heavenly abode.

## BIRTHDAYS OF CONFRERES

I would like to wish all the confreres who keep their birthday this month, a very 'Happy Birthday' and God's manifold blessings on them.

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 02. Fr. Anthony Lendakadavil | 20. Fr. Glorious Syiemlieh    | 25. Br. Alexius Condpan    |
| 06. Fr. Maitphang Mawrie     | Cl. Sawlus Kharpran           | Fr. Johnny Eapen Kalathoor |
| 12. Fr. Festus E. Shadap     | Cl. Eimisuk Dhar              | Cl. Mebandajied K T        |
| Cl. Agustin Pariong          | 21. Fr. Richard Louis Rapthap | Cl. Samuel Kungneihthanga  |
| 13. Br. Boneyfast Dkhar      | 23. Cl. Vijay Vishal Tigga    | 27. Cl. Reniel B Synrem    |
| Cl. Mark S Thyrniang         | 24. Fr. Carmel Myrthong       | 28. Fr. John D Sohshang    |
| 14. Br. Hooniwan Papang      | Cl. Gabriel L K Kharumnuid    | 31. Cl. Gedion Ramshon     |
| 15. Cl. Pjun Ingti           |                               |                            |
| 18. Cl. Celestine Narlong    |                               |                            |

## CONCLUSIONS

Before I conclude, I would like to remind you that the month of May is very important and significant for us Salesians. We keep it as Marian month due to the solemn feast of Mary Help of Christians which was very dear to our father and founder St. John Bosco. Let us keep alive and deepen this devotion to our blessed Mother by praying the Holy Rosary more devoutly and with faith for the intentions of our Province.

I extend my warmest greetings to all the members of our Salesian family on their feast days. I would like to wish a very happy feast to the Salesian Sisters (FMA) who celebrate the feast of St. Mary Mazzarello on 13<sup>th</sup> May. May the spirit of Don Bosco and St. Mary Mazzarello continue to inspire them to be authentic witnesses of God's love for the young people. I also wish a very happy feast to the Missionary Sisters of Mary Help of Christians who celebrate their principal patron's feast on 24<sup>th</sup> May and the Visitation Sisters of Don Bosco (VSDB) on 31<sup>st</sup> May. I assure them of my prayers that the Lord may continue to bless their Congregations with more vocations and they remain faithful to their charism.

Let me also take this occasion to wish you all a very happy feast of St. Dominic Savio whose feast we celebrate on 06<sup>th</sup> May. May he intercede for us and for all our aspirants, especially the community of Savio Juniorate.

Lastly, let us keep praying for one another that our journey together may be marked by joy, solidarity, and a deep sense of purpose, as we strive to live out the Salesian charism more enthusiastically and build a brighter future for our province. May our blessed mother, Mary Help of Christians, St. John Bosco, St. John Paul II be always by our side and intercede for us all.

May God bless us all!

Yours affectionately in Don Bosco,



**Fr. John Zosiama SDB**  
**INS Provincial**

